

Measuring What Matters: A Case Study of Measurement Development Methods for Institutionally Identified Student Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

Divisions of student affairs are impacted by an increased demand for accountability and the assessment of student learning in the co-curricular must be addressed. This study documented the measurement development processes for a student affairs division at a large, urban research institution. The research question for this study was: What processes did departments within a division of student affairs at a large urban research university use to develop assessment measures of student learning outcomes? A case study of a student affairs division from a large metropolitan area in the mid-western United States (MMU, a four-year high research university) was conducted for academic year 2012-2013. In the year of this study, there were eight departments within the Division of Student Affairs at MMU; six of which participated. The methods employed in this study included: interviews of leadership within the Division of Student Affairs and document analysis of 34 instruments. A significant contribution of this study was the identification of the development methods used for assessment instruments across a division intended to measure institutionally defined student learning outcomes. Findings from this study include themes of resources and timing for development. The study assists in understanding implications for practice, including the resources divisions of student affairs need to address accountability to constituents.

Keywords: assessment, case study, division of student affairs, measurement development, student learning outcomes (SLO)

Institutions need to know now, not only how well, but to what extent they are achieving their educational intentions (Maki, 2010). Erwin and Wise (2002) assert, “higher education is beyond the question of whether assessment should exist and is now asking how it can yield greater benefits for students and society” (p. 67). Student affairs divisions, as an explicit example area within higher education, are impacted by this increased demand for accountability. As prior trends of simple satisfaction surveys fall out of favor, there is a move towards more reliable measures of student learning, success, and achievement of institutional goals (Schuh, 2009). Effectively measuring student affairs’ contributions toward co-curricular experience outcomes has traditionally been challenging, yet shifts toward measuring learning have become more evident since the call for reform in student affairs measurement (Breciani, Zelna, & Anderson, 2004; Doyle, 2004; Green, Jones, & Alois, 2008; Keeling, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand how an incorporation of institutional mission and learning outcomes is evident in assessment activities within a student affairs division. Specifically, this study evaluates assessment measures of one campus, through evaluating the development process of measures aligned to the institutionally defined student learning outcomes (SLOs). The aim of this study is to address the research question, “What processes

did departments within a division of student affairs at a large urban research university use to develop items assessment measures of student learning outcomes?"

Measurement Development and Outcomes Assessment Literature

Today, expectations for student affairs assessment are high and have significantly changed over the past several years from satisfaction and utilization-based results to SLOs and effectiveness (American College Personnel Association, 1996; Bresciani et al., 2004; Doyle, 2004; Green, et al., 2008; Keeling, 2004). Improvements in the practices of student affairs arguably ought to consider how the division provides for student learning and how assessment data informs knowledge about the impact to student success (Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009b). Literature further asserts a necessity for assessment in student affairs identical to assessment for all higher education programs (ACPA, 1996; Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999; CAS, 2011; Keeling, 2004; Schuh & Upcraft, 2001; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). A rich and descriptive literature regarding assessment practices in student affairs provides focus on the necessity, types, and use of assessment as well as effective recommendations, examples of institutions' practice, and the strengths and pitfalls of assessment (Bresciani, 2006; Schuh & Associates, 2009; Schuh & Upcraft, 2001; Strayhorn, 2006; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996; Upcraft, 2003). However, the methods of instrument design from an empirical lens is not approached in this work.

Student affairs outcomes assessment literature covers how assessment should be done, but little is related to what is being done (Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009a; Upcraft, 2003; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). Student affairs divisions have been shown to have planning toward assessment (Woodard, Hyman, von Destinon, & Jamison, 1991) and are dependent on local-development measures (Green et al., 2008). It is known smaller institutional practices are intentioned toward institutional mission contributions, but management and support of contributions may be low (Doyle, 2004). Literature also demonstrates perceptions and attitudes, leadership, and accreditation affect the use of assessment (Seagraves & Dean, 2010). However, the actual processes at institutional and divisional levels involved in each study reported were not provided; therefore, processes of assessment development remain unclear.

Divisions of student affairs have demonstrated they should assess and report impact on SLOs, but collaborations for development often do not exist across departments, let alone have a connection toward larger institutional outcomes (Green, 2006). Additionally, student affairs in small school contexts have broadly looked at how they are using resources toward institutional missions, yet are not measuring their contribution to the mission or student outcomes (Ashley-Pauley, 2012). Missing from this body of literature was an application of program efforts giving attention to nuanced, richer understandings of division-wide impacts toward measures and divisional contributions toward an institution's mission through measure development.

Research Design and Context for the Study

This study is an inquiry of the interaction between a student affairs division and its department units' assessment processes. Case study methodology is valuable when investigating a process (Creswell, 2005; Glesne, 1999; Yin, 2003). Mid-Western Metropolitan University (MMU) was selected as the specific instrumental case (Creswell, 2005) for examination because the institution had established campus-wide SLOs adopted by the Division of Student Affairs. The university is located in a large mid-west metropolitan area and is designated as a four-year, high research activity campus with high undergraduate enrollment by Carnegie classification. For the year of the study, the student population at MMU was 71.76% undergraduate and

28.24% graduate students. The ethnic breakdown was 70.64% White, 21.68% Minority and 5.51% International students.

MMU Division of Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs at MMU was comprised of eight departments providing an array of wide-ranging services, programs, and activities. The focus at the time of the study for the division was on community building supportive of learning and success, increased student engagement, and promoted persistence to graduation. With over 80 employees (including graduate-employees), the division oversaw residential life, student leadership and activities, and health, wellness, recreation, and counseling facilities (see Table 1). Divisional level administration included a Director of Assessment who was in the role for six years.

Table 1. *Brief descriptions of departments in MMU's Division of Student Affairs*

Department*	Brief Description
Campus Recreation	Offered recreational opportunities, fitness programs, and intramural sports; promoted fitness while developing leadership, understanding, and respect.
Counseling and Psychological Services	Offered confidential counseling and support.
Dean of Students Office	Provided student advocacy, parent/family programs, and first-year programs to enhance student transitions.
Office of Student Leadership and Engagement	Provided experiences in leadership, organizations, social justice education, civic engagement, and community service events/programs.
Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs	Promoted student rights a civil learning environment.
Student Health Center	Health care to treat common to chronic illnesses.
Student Residential Life	Provided living options, activities, and residential learning communities.
University Union	Central to campus life served as a student, faculty, and staff one-stop destination.

Note. *Institution, departments, and/or division names and the description may have been changed in order to protect confidentiality

Data Collection

All eight departments were solicited to participate in the study. One department never responded to requests and a second declined participation. The remaining six departments were University Union, Campus Recreation, Dean of Students Office, Student Residential Life, Office of Student Leadership and Engagement, and Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs.

The primary sample used was departmental leadership. Participating department directors answered specific questions about each measure used during academic year 2012-2013, and were bound by that year, using retrospective interview techniques (Fetterman, 1989). Interview questions were structured for comparisons across participants to uncover the selection and processes of developing measures. The telephone interviews used 12 questions piloted prior to the study. Each interview ranged from 35 minutes to one hour and were

recorded, thoroughly noted, and data was member checked (Creswell, 2005; Glense, 1999). The interview data were analyzed to articulate the process of measurement development.

Data Analysis

Interview data was organized by thematic data analysis using a deductive process (Creswell, 2005) where themes and coding structure were based on literature about measurement design, assessment, and outcomes. The final analysis utilized mapping of any shared patterns, behaviors, and ways of thinking drawn on interviewees' understanding of the processes. The principal investigator performed all coding and performed a coding check to ensure reliability in charted themes.

The researcher's primary ethical consideration in this study was to preserve respect for persons involved and to protect the privacy of participants. This study was approved by an Institutional Review Board and received a letter of support from MMU. Participants interviewed received and signed informed consent documents prior to beginning interviewing. In addition, participants' privacy was protected by removing or masking items in interview responses or measurement instruments containing personal or departmental identifiable information.

Findings

Departmental Measure Development

Student Residential Life (SRL) used a total of five measures during academic year 2012-2013. None of the measures used by SRL had items assigned institutionally defined SLOs by the department or third-party, as the interview disclosed measures were used for program improvement. Based on the interview with leadership of SRL, none of the measures were initially created to measure institutionally defined SLOs.

The Dean of Students (DOS) used a total of two measures during the academic year 2012-2013. The process utilized included two pre-existing measures inherited when programs joined the newly formed department. The interviewee disclosed not being certain of the critical choices made during the measure development. During the interview, it was also determined surveys were distributed on paper forms. The interviewee further mentioned no measures had items aligned to institutionally defined SLOs. Leadership from DOS stated both measures were designed to measure program effectiveness from the student participant perspective.

The University Union (UU) used a total of two measures during academic year 2012-2013. According to the staff member who created one measure, the approach centered around, "the information (gained from the survey) was practical versus if there was alignment (in the measure toward [SLO]s)." It is important to note, the staff member was looking at institutional SLOs in their daily work. Therefore, even though UU did not assign items to SLOs, modifications may have been affected by the existence of them. "We definitely did modify the standard training survey that had been used [the year before], and I would say if the [SLO]s came in play, at all, they were in the background." In contrast, the second measure, Manager SLO Self-Assessment, was created with intentionality towards measuring SLOs of facility's student staff. This measure was developed in-house with UU staff resources and division assessment leadership consultation. The measure was developed the year before and modified only editorially during the year of the study. This measure was implemented as a part of manager evaluation processes and initially crafted to measure institutional SLOs.

The office of Student Leadership and Engagement (SLE) used a total of 25 measures during academic year 2012-2013. With one exception, processes of measure development for this department were rooted in institutionally defined SLOs. According to leadership in SLE, "We have been reporting for five years on outcomes from our leadership program and what we

were doing.” This length of time and commitment to measuring SLOs can be seen in processes the department used in developing measures. When discussing processes for program areas, leadership in SLE office said:

The creation of the instrument differs by program area. Most of what I work with for my programs is paper instruments created by our staff, looking at the goals and what we are trying to accomplish with the program. Then we would look at the connected [SLO]s and finding the questions that relate to that.

Overall Division of Student Affairs Measure Development

The resources departments used to develop the measures is summarized in Figure 1.

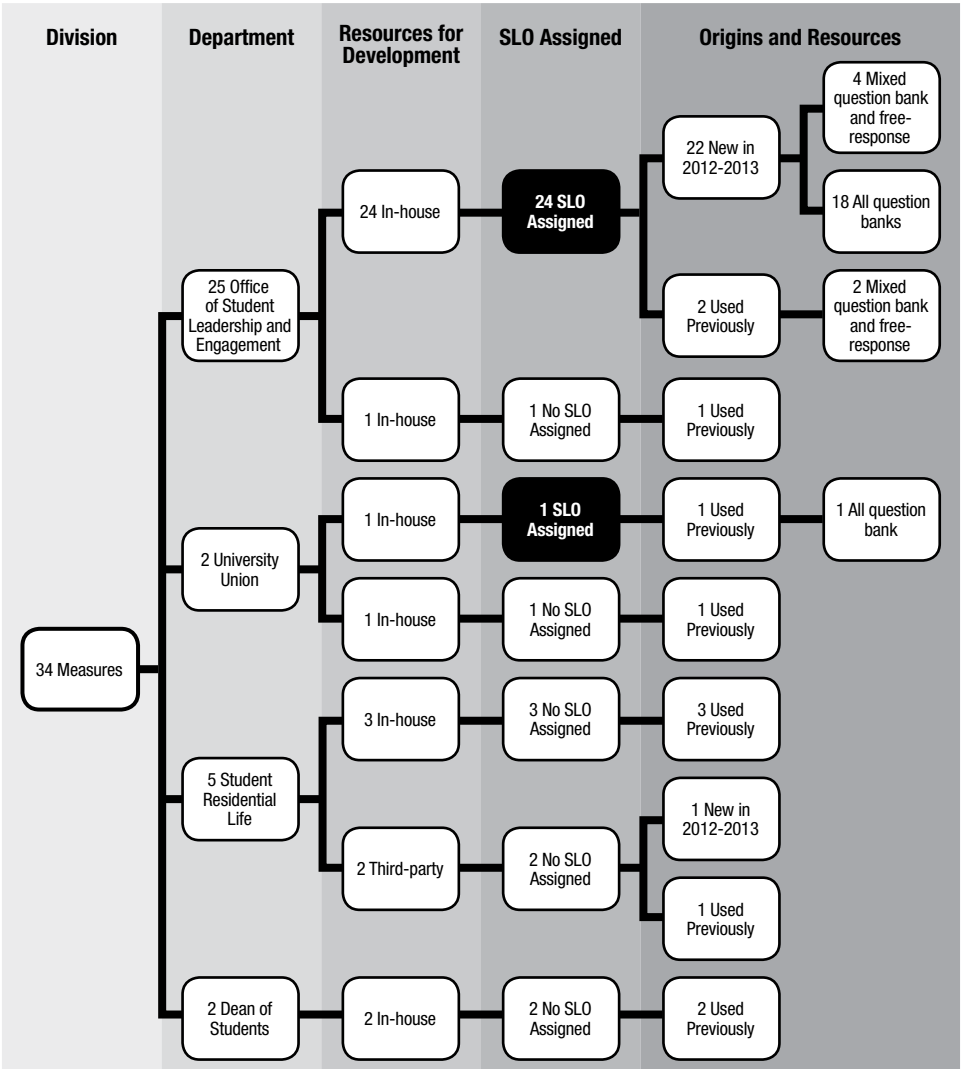


Figure 1. MMU Measure Development Themes. This charts depicts counts of measures by department, resources used, and SLO assignment.

Of the 34 measures used across departments, 94% (n=32) of the measures were created in-house (i.e. by a member of the Division of Student Affairs at MMU). Of the 32 in-house developed measures, 23 utilized the division resources (including a division developed pool of questions or the division assessment director) while nine did not. The two remaining measures were created by a third party (i.e. another division at MMU or a vendor) (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Summary of timing of measure development and resources used by department*

	Timing of Development			Resources Used		
	Recycled	Altered	New	In-house	Third-party	Division
University Union (UU)	x		x	x		x
Student Leadership and Engagement (SLE)	x	x	x	x		x
Student Residential Life (SRL)	x		x	x	x	
Dean of Students (DOS)	x			x		

The pre-existing (i.e. measured used in previous years without modification) or in-house (i.e. local developed) measures constituted 20.59% (7 of 34) of total measures in the Division of Student Affairs at MMU. In all seven cases, these measures can be characterized as repeated from a previous year without regard to institutionally defined SLOs. The division utilized two measures developed by a third-party. Similarly, these items were developed without intention to measure institutionally defined SLOs; noting one of the two measures was repeated from previous years.

In looking further at the 25 measures with items assigned institutionally defined SLOs by departments, neither the DOS nor the SRL is represented. Of these 25 measures, one of the measures was from the UU and the remaining 24 were from the SLE. Both departments used the division resources for the 25 measures with alignment to the institutionally defined learning outcomes. Of these measures, seven of the measures were modified for the year of the study, and 18 were created new for the year of the study. A total measure count and the process of alignment of items were address earlier, and the total measure breakdown and items with SLOs assignments are given in Table 3.

Table 3. *Total measure count by department with number of measures with and without items assigned to institutionally defined SLOs*

	Total Measures	Total Measures	
		With items assigned	Without items assigned
University Union	2	1	1
Office of Student Leadership and Engagement	25	24	1
Student Residential Life	5	0	5
Dean of Students	2	0	2
Campus Recreation	0	0	0
Student Conduct and Judicial Affairs	0	0	0
Total	34	25	9

Of the 34 measures utilized by the division, 32 surveys were developed in-house by staff members with varying degrees of division input. Two third-party developed surveys were used to evaluate the program or department and were not validated measures intended to measure student learning. Twenty five (out of 34) measures had items for which departments assigned SLOs; the remaining nine measures had no SLO assignments. Of these 25 measures, 22 were created new in the 2012-2013 year. Three previously used measures were modified during the year. All 25 measures included some SLO developed items or mirrored the bank of questions provided by divisional assessment leadership.

Discussion of Findings

The central themes for the processes in development of measures emerged focused on the resources departments utilized and timing of measure development. Specifically, resources departments across the Division of Student Affairs at MMU used were in-house resources, third-party developed measures, and instruments developed with input from the divisional assessment expert. The three types of timing in the measure development were to recycle, alter, or start a new measure. The sections below discuss these findings with respect to relevant literature.

Resources

The use and stewardship of resources toward the mission of an institution to effectively achieve institution mission and goals is critical in sustaining best practices in student affairs (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Ashley-Pauley, 2012). The current study found resources as a primary theme in the development of the measures used. One sub-theme of resources used included survey measures developed in-house, the most prominent across departments within the Division of Student Affairs at MMU. Upcraft and Schuh (1996) maintained, “local assessment studies will have the desired impact of demonstrating the worth of student services and programs and ensuring their survival” (p. 10). Of the 34 measures presented in this study by the division, staff members developed 32 surveys with varying degrees of input at the division-level. This finding is similar to the findings of Green et al. (2008) that the most commonly reported assessment method for divisions of student affairs was locally developed surveys. However, Palomba and Banta (1999) cautioned, “locally developed instruments can take a great deal of time to construct and may provide results that are difficult to interpret” (p. 100). Further, while results from locally-developed instruments “provide us with the richest information about the efficacy of our own educational practices”, they must also be validated (Maki, 2004, p. 94). This stresses the importance of validity, which would lead to a consideration of using outsourced or third-party instruments to measure student learning. Of importance to note, all of the measures were collected via paper format and none of the measures used collected student level data. Therefore, the division was not able to get a better understanding of learning across a student as they navigate in and out of the Division of Student Affairs.

The second sub-theme, third-party developed surveys, was consistent with two instruments in use during the 2012-2013 academic year for the Division of Student Affairs at MMU. It is important to note neither instrument was intended to measure student learning. Student Residential Life was the only department reported to use this method, and it is noted measures were program assessments used solely for evaluation. *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (ACPA & NASPA, 1997) emphasizes systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance, which was not the case with these measures. The use of measures across time, as in the third-party Facility Survey, can help with a clear understanding of performance and demonstrates systemic purpose; however, this study was not able to determine the motives for this practice.

The third and final sub-theme of resources used for the development of measures was input from the divisional assessment expert. Of the 34 measures used in the Division of Student Affairs at MMU, 25 were developed with divisional guidance in some form. Divisional leadership directed the development of a bank of questions as a resource for the departments, which resulted in some of the department's assignment and measuring SLOs in all 25 of these measures. Scholars agree SLOs should be measurable, meaningful, realistic, and ongoing and in alignment with the institutional mission (Bresciani et al., 2009b; Huba & Freed, 2000; Maki, 2004). Measures aligned to the institutional mission were possible at MMU because resources focused on the overall divisional contribution to student learning. Further, this finding supports previous assertions that divisional leadership's emphasis on assessment affects the use of assessment for student affairs (Green et al., 2008; Seagraves & Dean, 2010).

Missing from this central theme and sub-themes for the division are the use of broader institutional resources or collaborations and larger validated measures for student learning in the development of measures. Collaborations between student affairs staff and colleagues across the institution to plan for and foster student learning are important (ACPA, 1996). A single department, Student Residential Life, had a collaborative assessment measure, Service with Distinction, piloted by Finance and Administration, indicating a move toward this practice. Further, Student Leadership and Engagement specified, for the year following the study, work with faculty on measuring student learning was beginning to take shape. Kuh and Banta (2000) elaborate collaborations must be drawn upon in order to create environments where student learning is pervasive. With the exception of the two mentioned examples, collaboration was absent in the findings for this study. Given the history and institutional culture of SLOs at MMU, it could be expected more collaborations would be evident in the work of the Division of Student Affairs. However, based on the findings for this current study, this lack of collaboration on the development of measures of student learning is common and remains undocumented at the department level. This finding provides an opportunity for leadership in student affairs to be aware of the nature of collaborations and impacts toward measuring student learning in ways tandem to academic partners.

Timing of Measure Development

From the 34 measures used in the 2012-2013 academic year, 11 of the measures were used before the year of the study. Of these, 23 measures were new. In the remaining 11, eight were recycled and used without modifications, while three were altered and used with modifications. The eight recycled measures also were not assigned SLOs by the departments. Outcomes assessment is an active and cyclical process requiring attention to measures used (Bresciani et al., 2004; Bresciani et al., 2009; Huba & Freed, 2000; Maki, 2010). The recycled measures occurred more often in departments where staff had responsibility for the area years before the study or the measure came with the program (the former for Student Leadership and Engagement and the later was the case of the Dean of Students). This finding is similar to Seagraves and Dean (2010), who identified tenure of staff or their buy-in toward assessment of SLOs confounded the theme of previously used measures.

In both altered and new groups for the 2012-2013 academic year, the assigning of institutionally defined SLOs was connected to the measure development process (with the exception of the pilot of the Service with Distinction survey). By altering existing measures or tailoring newly created measures to align with institutional goals, the division made an explicit attempt to demonstrate how student affairs contributed to overall attainment of these goals. This finding is analogous to Doyle's (2004) conclusion that student affairs primarily engages in assessment to demonstrate contribution on an institutional level. The primary

purpose for 25 measures (22 new and 3 altered) was to assign and measure SLOs. Based on this outcome, it is recognized that measuring institutional outcomes was a priority for the Division of Student Affairs at MMU. However, this is contrary to Green's (2006) findings of a lack of use of institutional outcomes for divisions of student affairs. For the case of MMU and the pervasive culture of SLOs, there was a distinct opportunity for the Division of Student Affairs to move toward institutional contributions Doyle (2004) called for, yet Green (2006) was not able to document.

Another sub-theme to the altered and newly created measures was the use of divisional resources for these specific measures. As mentioned in the resources used in measure development, the division-wide bank of questions and working with the division assessment professional was central to identification of SLOs for 25 measures. The altered or newly developed measures are the same 25 measures, creating an interconnection between resources used and timing for measure development. This finding is related to a conclusion in Green (2006) where divisions with an assessment expert created an environment receptive to measuring SLOs. The findings in this study support having competency available for assessment and evaluation increases the measuring of the impact of student affairs toward student learning.

Implications for Practice

A major contribution of this work for student affairs is in the area of data collection methods on student learning. As a field, student affairs is not moving quickly enough to capture the holistic picture of student learning occurring outside the classroom. Yet, the internal and external pressures to demonstrate student learning contributions through institutional outcomes are progressive and rapidly growing. As Schuh (2013) extols, "the extent to which [student affairs] contribute[s] to student learning will solidify their role in the university" (p. 93). This study has highlighted a need for data collection practices to include student-level data across a division as an approach to solidify student affairs' contribution to student learning. Resources must be devoted to improve business practices for student affairs to include data gathering solutions and contributions to data in a shared and collaborative form.

Another implication for practice is the need for standardization in measuring student outcomes. There must be accountability to the institution for outcomes of students' participation in the departments of student affairs; yet to date, student affairs cannot uniformly respond to that call. The addition of same or similar measures, items, or tools for measuring student outcomes must come soon. This commitment, however, cannot be done in a vacuum. The current practices within academic affairs and in the K-12 sectors of education must help inform best practices and guide the measuring of learning for student affairs as a field.

Assessment practices need to move in pace with goals and initiatives for the division and institution was also a finding in this work. Alteration of measures already in use at MMU demonstrates positive consequences of moving in partnership where departments can continue a practice while aligning to institutional priorities. Additionally, this data also demonstrate a practice, for variety of reasons (i.e. staff departures), where measures are consistently reused, irrespective of new institutional goals. In everyday practice, the work done in assessing SLOs must be in tandem with these goals. For student affairs to remain relevant to students and the institution, it is important to understand broader goals and continually realign efforts without losing sight of efforts already in place (ACPA & NASPA, 1997; Huba & Freed, 2000; Maki, 2010; Palomba & Banta, 1999).

This study highlights competency needs in assessment and instrument design, particularly given the reliance on in-house developed measures. Assessment and evaluation professional

development opportunities and curriculum for student affairs preparations were addressed by NASPA & ACPA (2010) in a joint effort to underscore this need for training on instrument development for professionals. There are implications for divisions of student affairs to regularly assess the competency of staff and provide opportunities for continual growth in areas of assessment and evaluation. Further, educational programs for future student affairs professionals should consider this need, and how their programs are addressing this issue (e.g. coursework on assessment and instrument design).

Another implication for practice this study brought to bear is the need for internal measurement development tracking. The leadership within departments and divisions of student affairs need to document major decisions made in development processes in order have accurate records. Further, as professionals navigate across institutions, predecessors and owners of measurement development should be held accountable. In other words, departments should be obligated to provide notes and clear paths of decisions made so successive leaders can continue to further the work already in progress. This might be addressed if institutions move toward electronic data collection and away from paper forms that rarely collect student level data with accuracy.

This study emphasized collaboration across an institution whether with faculty, possessing research expertise, or staff in institutional research may be an underutilized resource. Leadership within departments and divisions of student affairs must seek out resources on their respective campuses toward improvement for learning. For MMU, there was dedicated assessment expertise as a divisional resource. As this is not always the case for institutions, divisions of student affairs must find ways to be creative while continuing to further the measurement of student learning occurring outside the classroom. Further, utilization of collaborations will help in alignment of the goals of a student affairs division with institution goals.

Student affairs professionals have found themselves participating in institutional conversation as their local culture has shifted to one of assessment and evidence (Shefman, 2014). To that end, ultimately this work has opened a call to student affairs to increasingly measure SLOs in direct ways. Meaningful participation in institutional discussions demands divisions of student affairs carefully attend to the development of valid and reliable items for measuring student learning. Such efforts are likely to pay important dividends given the field's integral contribution to the larger frame of student success across an institution and in all of higher education. This current study highlights the time is now for the field of student affairs to step up to the call for accountability toward measuring student learning.

Limitations

This study is intentionally limited to a specific student affairs division at a large, urban research institution. This sampling frame is appropriate for this study, however, it does not look at more than a single academic year. Therefore, there may be some limitation in longer term understanding of processes of measurement development and the implications after the study time-frame. Further, this work only provides a model to understand what the process of measure development and SLO alignment may look like and is not comprehensive as case study work is limited in generalizability (Creswell, 2005). This study is not intended to be a step-by-step guide in creating assessment practices that may, or may not align to institutional-level SLOs. More investigation taken on the processes of instrument development and outcome can inform practice and move divisions and institutions forward in how to address similar issues.

Social desirability of staff members responsible for developing the processes of their assessment measures, especially within the context of public accountability presented in the introduction to this study, is a limitation to consider. Given assessment is a controversial and impactful topic, participants may be more interested in responding in a way that may not accurately reflect their practice. Further, the researcher was an unknown party, located in the southwest having no previous interaction with the institution, to the interviewees and had no connection to staff professionally or personally. This intentionality in design may have helped reduce some of the need to appear socially desirable.

Future Research

In light of these limitations, recommendations for future research is to grow the understanding of processes for incorporating institutional mission and SLOs in assessment activities within student affairs. A study of current practices that clearly documents processes as they occur would be ideal. The collection of drafts measures and meeting notes about measures will give a more fine grained understanding of the major decisions being made, at the time decisions are made. Further, learners arrive at knowing through the accumulation and construction of knowledge. Therefore, it is recommended to collect data across multiple departments within a student affairs division using standard items traceable to the student level. Longer term research collecting data across years of student engagement in learning activities outside the classroom that were beyond the scope of this project would be a next step in understanding co-curricular learning.

Conclusion

The literature asserts a necessity for assessment in student affairs identical to assessment for all higher education programs (ACPA, 1996; Schuh & Upcraft, 2001; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). It is evident, based on the findings of this study, there is more progress to be made. As a practice, student affairs needs to move away from self-reported survey data and toward multi-faceted direct measures of student learning. The current body of literature supports an understanding of how assessment in student affairs has evolved, addresses the practical application of assessment practices, and provides anecdotes as to what divisions have done to shift toward a culture of assessment. This work adds to a more fine-grained understanding of steps undertaken in the measurement of co-curricular student learning and moves the field toward understanding progress made.

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